

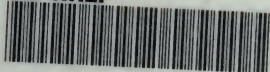
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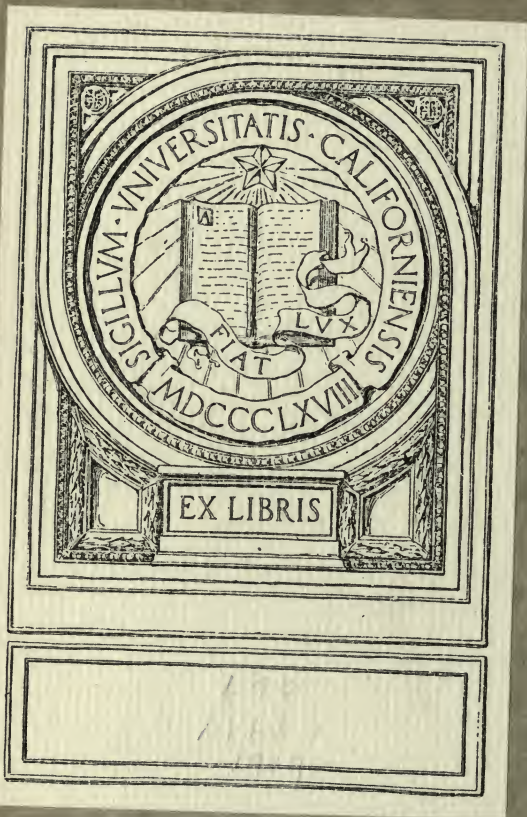
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[Continued on p. 3.]

TEXTS FOR STUDENTS, No. 9

GENERAL EDITORS: CAROLINE A. J. SKEEL, D.Lit.;
H. J. WHITE, D.D.; J. P. WHITNEY, D.D., D.C.L.

THE INSCRIPTION
ON THE
STELE OF MÉŠA'

COMMONLY CALLED
THE MOABITE STONE

THE TEXT IN MOABITE AND HEBREW,
WITH TRANSLATION

BY

H. F. B. COMPSTON, M.A.

VICAR OF BREDWARDINE, HEREFORD



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PREFACE

THE text adopted in this edition is that of the late Dr. Driver's Hebrew transcription in the Appendix to the Introduction of his *Notes on the Hebrew Text . . . of the Books of Samuel*, 2nd edition, 1913, by the kind permission of the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, Oxford.

The Moabite (Phœnician) re-transcription has been made from the above-mentioned text. This feature of the present edition—new in such works—may, it is hoped, be of use to persons beginning the study of Semitic palaeography. It should be noted that the type used represents a more or less standardized Phœnician script, and is not a facsimile of that of the Inscription, several letters of which (*e.g.* y, k, q, s, t) represent a more ancient fashion of writing.

I wish to acknowledge indebtedness to Dr. Driver's translation and commentary, Dr. W. H. Bennett's *The Moabite Stone* (1911), and the *Tafel* in Smend and Socin: *Die Inschrift des Königs Méša von Moab* (1886).

H. F. B. C.

Jan. 22, 1919.

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INTRODUCTION

THE Inscription here set forth is accepted, with practical unanimity on the part of experts, as authentic. It was chiselled on a monument of basalt, by order of the Méša', King of Moab, who is mentioned in 2 Kings iii. 4, and who here recounts his victories over Israel, to whom Moab had long been subject. The date must be somewhere about mid-ninth century B.C., the era of Omri and Ahab, Elijah and Elisha, and Jehu. Line 7 may allude to the overthrow of Omri's dynasty by Jehu, *circa* 843 B.C.

The interest of this famous monument is manifold.

(a) To the student of palæography it offers a good specimen of Phœnician script, parent of Alphabets, used not only by Moab but by Israel (as shown *e.g.* by the Siloam Inscription, eighth century B.C.); the older portions of the Old Testament were, in all probability, written in this script.

(b) The linguist can here study the essential features of the Grammar and Syntax, along with a useful vocabulary, of the Moabite language, separated from Hebrew by merely dialectical differences. A Hebrew student will find the inscription very like historical narrative in the Old Testament.

(c) The historian finds in the Inscription a valuable contribution to the little-known story of a people long extinct.

(d) The theologian sees evidence confirming what modern Biblical study has revealed as to Semitic religion. For there are, *e.g.* references to K^emôš, the god of Moab, and to Yahweh God of Israel, and His shrine at Nebo, with allusions to the treatment of con-

quered cities "devoted," *i.e.* put under the ban (*hérem*), to the national god.

The stele, or rather the upper portion of the original monument, measuring $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet in height, 2 feet in width, and 2 feet in thickness, was discovered in 1868 by the Rev. F. A. Klein, of the Church Missionary Society, on the site of the ancient Moabite city of Dibon. Its existence was known, from the report of natives, shortly previous to this event, to Monsieur Clermont-Ganneau, the eminent French archaeologist. The great interest shown by Europeans, and their offers to purchase, led the Arabs in the neighbourhood to break it up, possibly with the object of selling the fragments at fancy prices. Fire was kindled beneath the stone, cold water dashed on the top of it, and the priceless monument was soon cracked in pieces. Happily, before this stupid act of vandalism was perpetrated, rubbings of the inscription had been secured. Later on most of the fragments were recovered, the missing portions restored with the help of the rubbings, and the Stele of Méša' now stands in the Louvre. There is a facsimile in the British Museum.

The Inscription may be studied more fully with the aid of the works mentioned in the Preface to the present edition and other works named in their bibliographies, or in the various Dictionaries of the Bible.

Students offering the subject for examination should practise transcription in Phœnician and Hebrew, and should add vowel-points to the latter. This would prove a useful exercise. After the revision of his vocalization the student should, with a fine pen, point the Hebrew text on pp. 11-13, adding in the margin, or on an inserted fly-leaf, any various readings or alternative pointings.

INSCRIPTION OF MÉŠA'

I. THE MOABITE TEXT IN PHOENICIAN SCRIPT.

Words and letters within square brackets are restored conjecturally. Overlined letters are more or less uncertain of identification.

אֵל . שִׁשְׁי . יִלְי ?? מִיִּי . יָג . מִיִּי . יִלְי 1

. יָמִלִּי . שִׁשְׁי . לֹ . יִלְי . מִיִּי | מִיִּי 2
יִלְי . יִלְי . מִי

. מִי~ . מִיִּי . מִיִּי | מִיִּי . מִיִּי . מִי 3
[מ . מִי] . מִי | מִיִּי . מִיִּי

. מִי . יִלְיִ . לִי . מִיִּי . מִי . מִי 4
מִי | מִיִּי . לִי . מִיִּי

. שִׁשְׁי . מִי . יִלְיִ . לִיִּי . מִי 5
מִי . מִי . יִלְיִ . מִי . יִלְי . יִלְי

. מִי . מִי . מִיִּי . מִי . מִיִּי | מִי 6
י . מִי . מִיִּי | שִׁשְׁי . מִי . יִלְי

. מִי . לִיִּי | מִיִּי . מִי . מִיִּי 7
[מִי] . מִי . מִיִּי . מִי . מִי

• πρῆν. ἄψπ. ἀδ. ὁψππ | ἄδδδψ. ρ 8

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[7. 7] * . 444 . 0000 | 374

- . πζζζ . ψα . θακκγ . ζγζπ . πζ 18
 ῥ̄ᾱ . ζζζ . λχααπ . γλψγ | ωψγ
 | πθ . ζψθατλζθ . ζθ . θωπγ . ρζπ 19
 [γ π] ζζψ . ωψγ . ζωαλπγ
 | ζωα . λγ . ωα . ζταψ . θαψψ . θαα 20
 . ζ~θααγ . ρζπθ . ζαωαγ
 . ζθααα . πτλθ . γζα | ζθπα . λο . τθκλ 21
 τψθαγ . ζαοπζ . τψθ
 . γζαγ . ζπαοω . πτλθ . γζαγ | λθοζ 22
 αγ | ζτλαλψ . πτλθ
 . πτωο . γζαγ . γλψ . τθ . πτλθ . γζ 23
 ῥ̄ααθ . ζπ[ψλ . θγ]ωαα . παλγ
 ααθ . ααα . θααθ . ζα . ααγ | ααα 24
 λ̄ . γωο . γοα . λγλ . αψαγ . ζθ
 . πταγ . γζαγ | ζτπθθ . αθ . ωα . ψγ 25
 ακκθ . ζθαααλ . τταγγα
 . αοαο . πτλθ . γζα | λχααπ . [π] 26
 . ζζααθ . τλκψα . πτωο . γζαγ
 . καα . πγ . τψθ . τθ . πτλθ . γζα 27
 . ζπο . πγ . αρθ . πτλθ . γζα | αα

- . יגא . ל . נ . יממ . יגא . מ 28
 ל . יממ | תמממ
 . תתמ . ממ . יממ . תממ ת 29
 תמ . יממ | תממ . ל
 | יתמ . תמ . מ[מ]ממ [. תמ] . נ 30
 ממ . תמ . ממ . מממ . ימממ . תמ
 . ממ . ימממ | תממ . יממ 31
 מ . ממ . תמ . ימ
 . מממ . ממ . ממ . נ . מממ 32
 מממ | ימממ
 . ל . מממ . ממ . ימ[ממ] 33
 מ . מממ . ימ
 יממ | ממ . תמ 34

II. THE TEXT IN HEBREW SQUARE SCRIPT.

Words and letters within square brackets are restored conjecturally. Overlined letters are more or less uncertain of identification.

- 1 אנך . משע . בן . כמש . ? ? מלך . מאב . הר
 2 יבני | אבי . מלך . על . מאב . שלשן . שת . ואנך . מלכ
 3 תי . אחר . אבי | ואעש . הבמת . זאת . לכמש .
 בקרחה | ב[מת . י]
 4 שע . כי . השעני . מכל . *השלכן . וכי . הראני . בכל .
 שנאי | עמר
 5 י . מלך . ישראל . ויענו . את . מאב . ימן . רבן . כי .
 יאנף . כמש . באר
 6 צה | ויחלפה . בנה . ויאמר . גם . הא . אענו . את .
 מאב | בימי . אמר . כ
 7 וארא . בה . ובבתה | וישראל . אבד . אבד . עלם .
 וירש . עמרי . את . [אר]
 8 ין . מהרבא | וישב . בה . ימה . וחצי . ימי . בנה .
 ארבען . שת . דיש
 9 בה . כמש . בימי | ואבן . את . בעלמען . ואעש . בה .
 האשוח . ואבן

* The ה in Driver's text is obviously a misprint for ה . See translation. The Moabite is clearly א .

- 10 את . קריתן | ואש . גר . ישב . בארץ . עמרת . מעלם .
ויבן . לה . מלך . י
- 11 שראל . את . עמרת | ואלתחם . בקר . ואחזה |
ואהרג . את . כל . העם . [מ]
- 12 הקר . רית . לכמש . ולמאב | ואשב . משם . את .
אראל . דורה . וא[ס]
- 13 חבה . לפני . כמש . בקרית | ואשב . בה . את . אש .
שרן . ואת . אש
- 14 מחרת | ויאמר . לי . כמש . לך . אחז . את . נבה .
על . ישראל | ואֶ
- 15 הלך . בללה . ואלתחם . בה . מבקע . השחרת . עד .
הצהרם | ואֶה
- 16 זה . ואהרג . כלֶה . שבעת . אלפן . ג[ב]רן . וגרן |
וגברת . ו[גר]
- 17 ת . ורחמת | כי . לעשתר . כמש . החרמתה | ואקה .
משם . א[ת . כ]
- 18 לי . יהוה . ואסחב . הם . לפני . כמש | ומלך . ישראל .
בנה . אֶת
- 19 יהין . וישב . בה . בהלתחמה . בי | ויגרשה . כמש .
מפנ[י ו]
- 20 אקה . ממאב . מאתן . אש . כל . רשה | ואשאה .
ביהין . ואחזה .

- 21 לספת . על . דיבן | אנך . בנתי . קרחה . חמת .
היערן . וחמת
- 22 העפל | ואנך . בנתי . שעריה . ואנך . בנתי .
מגדלתה | וא
- 23 נך . בנתי . בת . מלך . ואנך . עשתי . כלאי . האש
[וח . למ] ין . בקרב
- 24 הקר | ובר . אנ . בקרב . הקר . בקרחה . ואמר . לכל .
העם . עשו . ל
- 25 כם . אש . בר . בביתה | ואנך . כרתי . המכרתת .
לקרחה . באסר
- 26 [י] . ישראל | אנך . בנתי . ערער . ואנך . עשתי .
המסלת . בארנן .
- 27 אנך . בנתי . בת . במת . כי . הרם . הא | אנך . בנתי .
בצר . כי . עין .
- 28 ש . דיבן . חמשן . כי . כל . דיבן . משמעת |
ואנך . מלכ
- 29 תי . מאת . בקרן . אשר . יספתי . על . הארץ | ואנך .
בנת
- 30 י . [את .] מהר [ב] א . ובת . דבלתן | ובת . בעלמען .
ואשא . שם . את . נקד
- 31 צאן . הארץ | וחורנן . ישב . בה . בת . וק . אש
- 32 דיאמר . לי . כמש . רד . הלתחם . בחורנן | וארד
- 33 [ויש] בה . כמש . בימי . ועל . דה . משם . עש
- 34 שת . שרק . ואנ

III. TRANSLATION.

Words in italics are required by English idiom: they are not in the original. The transliteration of proper names is in accordance with the notation in the Hebrew Grammar of Gesenius. Words and letters within square brackets are restored conjecturally. Words within curved brackets are alternative renderings, &c.

- 1 I am Měša' son of K^emôš ? king of Mō'āḥ the Da-
- 2 -ibonite. My father reigned over Mō'āḥ thirty years
and I reign-
- 3 -ed after my father. And I made this high place for
K^emôš in Ḳrḥh.* [High place of sal-]
- 4 -vation, for he had saved me from all the assailants (?),
and because he had caused me to look upon † all
my foes. 'Omr-
- 5 -î was king of Yisrā'ēl, and he afflicted Mō'āḥ days
many, for K^emôš was angry with his la-
- 6 -nd. And his son succeeded him, and he too said I
will afflict Mō'āḥ. In my days he said s[o],
- 7 and I looked upon † him and upon his house. And
Israel utterly perished everlastingly. And 'Omri
possessed the [la-]
- 8 -nd of M^ehēd^eḥā. And (Israel) dwelt therein, his
days and half the days of his son, forty years; and
- 9 K^emôš restored it in my days. And I built Bá'al-m^eôn
and I made therein the reservoir (?), and I built

* line 3. Perhaps "Ḳ^erēḥah" or "Ḳorḥāh."

† lines 4, 7. "Look upon," i.e., with exultation over a fallen foe.
Cf. Ps. lix. 10 E.V.

- 10 Kīryātēn. Now the men of Gad had dwelt in the
land of 'aṭārôt from of old; and the king of Yi[srā'ēl
(*beginning of line 11*)] built for himself
- 11 'aṭārôt. And I fought against the city and took it.
And I slew all the people [from]
- 12 the city, a gazing-stock for Kēmôš and for Mō'āb. And
I restored (*or captured*) from thence the altar-
hearth (?) of Dāwḏōh (*or its tutelary spirit?*), and
I drag-
- 13 -ged it before Kēmôš in Kēriyyôt. And I placed
therein the men of Šrn* and the men of
- 14 Mhrt.† And Kēmôš said unto me Go, seize Nēbōh
against Yisrā'ēl. And I
- 15 went by night, and fought against it from dawn unto
noon. And I sei-
- 16 -zed it and slew all of it, 7000 men and men-sojourners ‡
and women & [women-sojourner-] ‡
- 17 s, and damsels; for to 'aštar-Kēmôš had I devoted it.
And I took from thence the [ves-]
- 18 -sels of Yahweh, and dragged them before Kēmôš.
Now the king of Yisrā'ēl had built
- 19 Yáhaš, and dwelt therein while he fought against
me. And Kēmôš drove him away from before me,
and
- 20 I took from Mō'āb 200 men, all the head-men thereof;
and I brought them up against Yáhaš, and seized it
- 21 to add unto Daiḥôn. I built Kṛhḥ,§ the wall of
Ye'ārīn (*or the woods*), and the wall of

* line 13. Šārōn (?)

† line 14. Maḥarāt (?)

‡ line 16. *I.e.*, recognised settlers. Cf. 2 Sam. i. 13.

§ line 21. See note, line 3.

- 22 'ōpēl (*or* the Acropolis). And I built the gates thereof, and I built the towers thereof. And
- 23 I built the king's house, and I made the two reser-
[voirs? for wa]ter in the middle of
- 24 the city. Now cistern there was none in the middle of the city, in Kṛḥh.* And I said to all the people, Make to
- 25 you every man a cistern in his house. And I cut out the cutting for Kṛḥh * by means of the prisoner-
- 26 [-s captured from] Yisrā'ēl. I built 'ārō'ēr and I made the high-road by the Arnon.
- 27 I built Bēt-bāmôt for it was destroyed. I built Béṣer for ruins
- 28 [had it become. And the head-me]n of Daiḥôn were 50, for all Daiḥôn was loyal. And I reign-
- 29 -ed [over] 100 in the cities which I added to the land. And I buil-
- 30 -t M^ehēd^e[b]ā and Bet-diḥlātēn, and Bēt-bá'al-m^eôn; and I brought thither the sheep-masters (?) †
- 31 sheep of the land. And Ḥôrônēn, there dwelt therein ??
- 32 [And] K^emôš said unto me, Go down, fight against Ḥôrônēn. And I went down
- 33 and K^emôš [resto]red it in my days. And from thence
- 34 And I

* lines 24, 25. See note, line 3. † line 30. See 2 Kings iii. 4.

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